

Fiscal Year 2017 Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions:

Since 1985 the City of Alexandria has been funding a local arts grant to help ensure access to quality arts programs and events for its residents and visitors. The Alexandria Commission for the Arts reviews all of the submitted grant applications and makes the grant funding recommendation to City Council for consideration.

The amount of grant funding varies from year to year, as do the requirements. Please be sure to review the grant application and guidelines carefully before applying.

What types of grants are available?

1. **Organizational Grants.** Organizations may apply to one of the following grant programs during any grant-making cycle:
 - *Operating Support* (up to \$12,500 not to exceed 25% of operating budget, cash match 1:1). Operating Support grants provide unrestricted operating funds for Alexandria-based arts organizations' regular programming activities and administration.
 - *Program* grants (up to \$7,500 not to exceed 50% of total budget, cash match 1:1). Program grants support an ongoing or short-term arts program performed or presented to substantially engage or benefit the residents of the City of Alexandria. Annual grants fund activities that take place within the Commission's fiscal year.
2. **Project Grant for Individuals.**
 - *Special Opportunity Grants* (up to \$2,500; no cash match) for individual artists and artist teams encourage innovative, thought-provoking projects that engage residents and visitors in Alexandria's public spaces. The Arts Commission opens a Special Opportunity grant competition on an ad-hoc basis as funding permits. Special opportunities grants fund activities that start no earlier than July 1 and must be completed by June 12 of the following calendar year.

Who is eligible to apply for a Grant?

For All Grants: In order to be considered for funding, all applicants must submit an application that meets the following criteria:

- All required documents have been uploaded;
- All question items have a response, even if the response is N/A;
- Application was received at or before the deadline;
- Applicant is not in default of payment to any agency of the City of Alexandria;

- During either of the last two fiscal years, have completed the ACA-funded program/project according to the terms of the grant application, unless the entity has received the full permission and consent of the Commission;
- Must have completed and submitted a final report on any projects previously funded by the City of Alexandria Arts Commission, unless the timeline of the previous project as originally proposed has not come to its conclusion;
- Have not applied to another grant for the same fiscal year;
- All new applicants or arts organizations who have not requested funds through the City's arts grants are required to attend a workshop or webinar. Applicants who do not attend will not be eligible.
- Proposed budget provides the required cash match; other funding from the City of Alexandria such as, but limited to, the Marketing Fund, the Alexandria City Public Schools and from other Departments, cannot be used for the cash match.
- Is not affiliated with an organization (e.g., "Friends of" group) that has submitted an application to the same grant program;
- Grant request is for an event or activity not considered by the Commission to be an artistic event (see list of ineligible activities for grant support in policy statement).

For Operating Support Grants: Additional eligibility criteria for applications to the Operating Support program are as follows:

- Must have as its primary mission the exhibition, presentation, production or performance of, and/or education in, an arts discipline;
- Must have been in existence as an incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization for three years prior to applying for a grant;
- Must be an arts organization based in the City of Alexandria; evidence of this claim will be a City of Alexandria address on the organization's IRS 990 Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax;
- At least 50% of the organization's public artistic activities must have been held in the City of Alexandria during the last year and at least 50% are projected to be held in the City of Alexandria for the grant year;
- Must be able to provide (as part of the application) a minimum of one full year of financial history completed prior to the grant deadline;

For Program Grants: Additional eligibility criteria for applications for Program grants are as follows:

- Must have as its primary mission the exhibition, presentation, production or performance of, and/or education in, an arts discipline;
- Must have been in existence as an incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization for one year prior to applying for a grant, or have provided evidence that the organization has applied for a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status;
- All program activities for which the organization is seeking support must take place in the City of Alexandria and must include substantial participation from or benefit to the City's residents;
- Must be able to provide (as part of the application) a minimum of one full year of financial history completed prior to the grant deadline;

For Special Opportunity Grants: Additional eligibility criteria for applications to the Special Opportunity program are as follows:

- Must be artists or artist teams who have experience with engaging communities through art projects;
- All program activities for which the artist or artist team is seeking support must take place in the City of Alexandria and must include substantial participation from or benefit to the City's residents;
- An artist who holds a leadership position in an organization that has applied to one of the organizational grant categories named above will be considered ineligible;
- An employee or artist associated with an organization that has applied to one of the organizational grant categories named above will be considered eligible if the project proposed in the application is not directly related to the work s/he does for the organization.

City agencies, employees or volunteers (defined as any agency under the direct control of an elected official, or which reports directly to the City Manager, may not apply for an Arts Grant; they may only play a supportive role in a program proposed by an organization or group.

Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

- Applicant is in default of payment to any agency of the City of Alexandria.
- Applicants that do not complete the grant application in full, or fail to supply information or documentation when and where required.

- Applicants that, during either of the last two fiscal years, fail to complete the ACA-funded program/project according to the terms of the grant application, without full permission and consent of the Commission.
- Applicants that failed to complete a final report form or have an outstanding final report form or issue from a previously-awarded grant from the Commission.
- Applicant's grant request is for an event or activity not considered by the Commission to be an artistic event. (Note: An ethnic festival, as defined by the City of Alexandria, is not considered to be an artistic event, however artistic activities included in, part of, or sponsored by an ethnic festival may be eligible for project grants.)
- Colleges, universities and libraries may not receive grants for arts.

What is not funded with a grant?

- Activities intended to influence, either directly or indirectly, the actions of any public official or body, elected or appointed, on any existing or proposed legislation.
- Activities restricted, entirely or substantially, to the membership of the organization.
- Activities completed prior to the beginning of a granting period.
- Activities that take place outside the city limits of Alexandria.
- Activities associated with a school's internal arts programs such as in-school student performances, the purchase of art supplies, or cash awards for student arts competitions and purchases of publications
- Capital expenditures associated with improvement in facilities and/or purchases of equipment in excess of \$1,000.
- Expenses related to reduction of accumulated deficits or debts.
- Expenses related to fund-raising events.
- Expenses related to social functions, whether an integral part of the project funded by the Commission or not.
- Expenses associated with cash awards, prizes, tuition, or to purchase gift cards.
- Programs or projects those are essentially rehabilitative or therapeutic in nature.
- Programs or projects designed to achieve goals that are primarily political, religious or social.

What are the goals of the granting program?

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts Granting Program has the following goals:

- To strengthen Alexandria's creative capacity by providing its residents with diverse opportunities to meaningfully engage with the arts;
- To improve the capacity and stability of Alexandria-based arts organizations to create, perform, and present works of artistic excellence and innovation through organizational support and program funding;

- To create a vibrant urban environment by supporting diverse individual artists, organizations, and other entities in the creation, performance, and presentation of high-quality works of art across the City of Alexandria.

How are applications evaluated?

Applications are reviewed by a Grants Task Force comprised of Arts Commissioners, artists, community members, and patrons.

The Task Force evaluates each application based on the guidelines and the following criteria:

- **Artistic excellence** and quality of the proposed program or project.
- **Public engagement opportunities** to the City of Alexandria including but not limited to: community engagement and outreach to, and participation by, a diverse audience; developing of local and regional talent; and attracting of audiences outside of Alexandria.
- **Feasibility** of applicant to successfully implement the annual program or project.
- **Fiscal responsibility** of the applicant with realistic financial goals and strategic planning in support of the project.
- **Marketing efforts** to attract diverse audiences and meet the goals of the project.

What are the funding policies?

- Grants may not be awarded to individuals or to organizations for cash awards, prizes, tuition, or to purchase gift cards.
- Applicants must not engage in any activities or present any programs in violation of the statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia or ordinances of the City of Alexandria.
- Applicants must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which includes provisions that no otherwise qualified person, solely by reason of a handicap in any way or form, shall be excluded from, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any form in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
- Where required, Applicants must comply with Federal Fair Labor Standards which stipulate that all professional performers and supporting personnel will be paid not less than the minimum compensation as determined by the Secretary of Labor to be prevailing minimum compensation for persons employed in similar activities; and that professional and support personnel will not be subject to unsanitary, hazardous or dangerous working conditions in organizations' projects or products.
- Federal, State and City of Alexandria statutes require all applicants to comply with laws and regulations governing nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: not discriminating because of race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation or disability.
- Tribal organizations that receive grassroots funds must represent state or federally recognized tribes.

Is there a matching requirement?

Yes, there is a dollar to dollar (1:1) cash match requirement for the Operating and Program Grants. No in-kind donations or services can be applied towards the match. The cash match must be met prior to submitting a Final Report, but no later than June 12, 2017. Other funding from the City of Alexandria such as, but not limited to, the Marketing Fund, Alexandria City Public Schools and from other Departments, cannot be used for the cash match.

Is there anything that applicants are required to do if awarded a grant?

Yes, the following is required of all grantees:

- **THE GRANT CONTRACT:** The approved application form represents an agreement between the City of Alexandria and the applicant. The applicant will comply with all conditions set forth in the application form and any other documents furnished to the applicant related to the grant. Every recipient of a grant is required to respond in a timely manner to all requests for information required by the Office of the Arts and the Alexandria Commission for the Arts. Two signatures will be required for the application and certification forms, preferably from the board treasurer and president.
- **CONDUCT OF THE GRANT SUPPORTED ACTIVITY:** Activities that receive financial support from the City of Alexandria shall take place within the fiscal year for which the grant was awarded, unless otherwise approved by the Office of the Arts and the Alexandria Commission for the Arts.
- **ACKNOWLEDGMENT:** All grant recipients are required to credit the Commission and the City of Alexandria and use their logos when appropriate, for its support in all appropriate printed public relations materials relating to activities supported by the Commission.
- **LETTERS TO CITY COUNCIL:** Applicants are required to write their City Council to invite them to the funded program(s) or to thank them for appropriating grant funds. The letter should provide information about how grant funds were used to support your organization or program, and the community impact of the event. A copy of all letters to City Council must be included in the final report.
- **PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ARTS STUDIES:** During the grant period, the Office of the Arts may request grantees to participate in local, regional, or national arts studies. The studies may be related to, but are not limited to: audience spending, organization management, or facility usage. Grantees are required to assist the Office of the Arts by completing these studies.
- **FINAL REPORTS:** At the completion of the project a Final Report is required. Grant recipients must submit a final report 30 days after the completion of the project/activities, but no later than June 12, 2017. *If an applicant fails to complete a satisfactory final report form or has an outstanding final report form or issue from a previously-awarded grant, the applicant will not receive a grant for the next grant cycle, even if the Arts Commission awarded the grant.*
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- **FINAL REPORTS:** At the completion of the project a Final Report is required. Grant recipients must submit a final report 30 days after the completion of the project/activities, but no later than June 12, 2017. Failure to submit a Final Report could result in the delay or loss of the final grant payment, or loss of eligibility for future grants from the Commission.

Are there any workshops that I can attend?

Yes! Each year the Office of the Arts and the Commission host a series of workshops and webinars to assist with the grant writing process.

The Office of the Arts and the Alexandria Commission for the Arts requires artists and nonprofit organizations applying to a grant category for the first time to attend one of the grant workshops or webinars to learn of current policies and procedures of the grant program. Other applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the grant workshops or webinars, but not required to attend.

The workshops are scheduled for:

- **Wednesday, January 13, 2016, 12:00 pm,** Individual Artists Grant Workshop, (Brown Bag Lunch), Sister Cities Suite, City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria, VA

- **Thursday, January 21, 2016, 12:00 pm and Monday, February 8, 2016, 7:00 pm**, Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron Street, Alexandria, VA

The webinars (Live) are scheduled for:

- **Monday, January 11, 2016, 7 pm; Thursday, February 2, 2016, 7:00 pm; and Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 11:00 am**, Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson Street, Alexandria, VA

Registration for the webinars is required. Log-in information will be sent upon registration. Send registration request to cherylanne.colton@alexandriava.gov

How will I know I received a grant award?

The Office of the Arts staff will inform each grant recipient in writing of the applicant's grant award, method of disbursement, and any additional requirements the applicant must fulfill. This notification will occur once the Commission receives final approval of its fiscal year budget. City Council votes on the budget in May and the recipients are notified in June.

When are the funds available?

For organizational grants, an initial payment (85% of the award) is processed within the first quarter of the City's Fiscal Year. The final payment (15%) of the award is available after timely submission and acceptance of a Final Report.

For individual artist grants, an initial payment (50% of the award) is processed between 4 and 6 weeks after July 1; the final payment (50%) of the award is available after timely submission and acceptance of a Final Report.

When do the grant funds have to be used?

The Fiscal Year period used by the City of Alexandria begins July 1, 2016 and ends June 30, 2017. All applicants must use this funding period when providing information requested.

Who can I contact if I have questions or need additional assistance?

If applicants have questions, need assistance, or to inquire about available workshops, please contact anyone at the City of Alexandria Office of the Arts or email Cheryl Anne Colton at: cherylanne.colton@alexandriava.gov. If reasonable accommodation is needed, please call (703) 746-5588; TTY (703) 838-4902.